



Neighborhood Meeting with City Council

Central Houghton Neighborhood

Submitted Questions/Comments (17)

Meeting Date: April 6, 2011



City Manager's Office

1. What is this council's position on the continued existence of the Houghton Community Council?

Response: *The Kirkland City Council has not taken a position on this matter. A bill that was introduced by the State Legislature has since died and will not be considered in this legislative session. The City Council adopts a legislative agenda for each session. The adopted legislative agenda indicates issues that the Council will either support or oppose. The matter of the community councils was not addressed in Kirkland's legislative agenda.*

2. You must get hundreds of e-mails from citizens. How do I know you are going to read mine and actually think about my concerns related to the city of Kirkland and the Houghton neighborhood? It seems with annexation and Totem Lake development issues your focus in the next few years will be toward that part of the city. Sometimes I feel that the city council views Houghton as a spoiled brat. Why do you think that is? The citizens in the Houghton neighborhood contribute a great deal of energy to the well-being of Kirkland.

Response: *The City Council does receive hundreds of letters and emails every year. Every letter and email is forwarded to the City Council and is routed to the appropriate staff person to draft a response. Each response is reviewed by the City Manager and a copy is provided to the City Council. Although the City organization is very busy preparing for annexation, we try to maintain a quick response rate for City Council correspondence because the City Council wants to hear from the community values their input.*

3. I would like these questions answered by each city council member please. Why should all city residents be given the right to vote on whether a state legislated community council exists when only Houghton residents voted on the original annexation? If new legislation will provide for all city residents to vote on whether the Houghton Community Council will continue, why shouldn't all city residents be allowed to vote on whether new areas are annexed into the city? Do you feel it's fair to the Houghton neighborhood to renege on annexation commitments that were made after "negotiating" certain rights over land use issues by allowing the whole city to vote on the CC existence?

Response: *The question has been sent to each of the Councilmembers. Answers will be posted online after the April 6, 2011 meeting with the Central Houghton Neighborhood Association.*

Planning

4. Provide information about the business overlay for the 68th St/108th Ave corridor.

Response: *The City is working with the Houghton Community Council on the goals and policies for this area. The draft wording for the business overlay zone includes the following policy language:*

"Coordinate with the Everest Neighborhood to develop a plan for the Houghton Neighborhood Center, which overlays properties along the NE 68th Street Corridor, in both the Everest and Central Houghton neighborhoods. The plan should promote a vibrant mix of neighborhood commercial and other compatible higher intensity uses while minimizing adverse impacts on residential areas to the south and east." For additional draft policies see the following link to the HCC packet discussed at their meeting on 3/28/2011:

<http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Assets/Planning/Planning+PDFs/Central+Houghton+Neighborhood+HCC+03282011.pdf>

This commercial area will eventually have its own unique zoning and design guidelines, but this will not occur until after the Everest Neighborhood Plan has been updated, since half of this commercial area is in Everest. The schedule for the next Everest Neighborhood Plan update is unknown at this time.

5. What can the City do to help the neighborhood resolve the following issues with the approval of the new International Community School and Community Elementary School?

Response: *The Lake Washington School District is planning to rebuild the current school facilities. School District officials have had preliminary conversations with City officials but a formal application has not yet been submitted. City Staff has strongly encouraged School District officials to meet with neighbors and address potential issues prior to submittal of a formal application. Prior to submitting a building permit application, the School District must obtain what is called a Process IIB zoning permit. A Process IIB permit involves a public hearing before the City Hearing Examiner with approval by the City Council. Because the project is located within boundaries of the former Town of Houghton, the project also must be approved by the Houghton Community Council; and the Community Council will participate in the public hearing. If the School District submits a complete application this spring, it's likely that the public hearing will be scheduled sometime this summer. The City has 120 days to complete the processing of the application.*

The Process IIB permit review process is considered to be a "quasi-judicial" matter. The decision on the permit must be based on whether the proposal meets the standards of the Zoning Code. As decision makers, the City Council and Houghton Community Council must base their decision on the official hearing record and they may not discuss the application outside of their meetings on this topic.

For further information about this project, contact the project planner Tony Leavitt at tleavitt@kirklandwa.gov or 425-587-3253.

- a) Traffic Impact. This is a huge topic as the current plans show the existing exit of the school at 65th and 112th will now be both the entrance and exit. There is also a proposed increase in the quantity of students that will be enrolled. The previous neighborhood/school district agreement stated a maximum of 360 "students body."

Response: *City Staff recently completed a traffic concurrency review for the project to ensure that the established traffic level of service at specific intersections will be maintained. City Staff has requested that the School District submit a traffic impact analysis to address items including driveway access and site distances. Additionally, the applicant will need to submit a parking demand study to determine the number of required parking stalls. If you have any questions any additional questions regarding traffic concurrency or the traffic impacts analysis, contact the project planner Tony Leavitt at tleavitt@kirklandwa.gov or 425-587-3253.*

- b) Changes in view corridors. We realized at the meeting that one neighbor will be losing all of their view.

Response: *The project will have to comply with all regulations governing building height and setbacks. The City does not have regulations that restrict the placement of buildings based on view blockage.*

- c) Landscape plantings and the ongoing maintenance. Currently on the plans conifer trees are shown all along the east side of the property. The landscape architect verbally assured us that this is not the case but the current drawings show it. This is a prime example where we need to make sure this gets in writing and the maintenance of any plantings is enforceable. i.e. previous agreements were written as such: "maintain a 15' maturity height of all trees"

Response: *City Zoning regulations have requirements for landscaping and buffers. Many of those requirements are intended to provide a visual screening from adjacent properties. However, through the Process IIB zoning permit, changes to landscaping requirements may be approved if such changes will be more beneficial to the neighboring properties.*

- d) Lighting is another topic that was part of the previous agreement and that has never been enforced. The school district has never been willing to discuss the appropriate cost effective and environmental friendly way of dealing with the property lighting.

Response: *Impacts of lighting on nearby properties may be considered through the Process IIB permit process. The issue of cost effectiveness is something that will have to be pursued directly with the School District.*

- e) After hours use of school. One discussion was it would be prudent to make sure that no one would allow church services on weekends, as an example.

Response: *The City has not historically prevented the School District from allowing school facilities to be used by churches or other groups on weekends or after school on week days. This too could be an issue addressed through the Process IIB permit process.*

- f) Other topics: New sidewalks all the way around the school, new fence or old fence or no fence, continue the no on street parking, parking lot use during summers, there will be 5 buses coming to the property each day and the current plan shows a bus entrance off of 111th on the West side of the property, construction process and noise prevention.

Response: *City regulations require sidewalks to be built along all adjacent rights of way. Existing sidewalks may not be required to be rebuilt if they are in good condition. The other issues above may be considered through the Process IIB permit process.*

Transit Oriented Development

6. Provide an update on the South Kirkland Park and Ride Transit Oriented Design.

Response: *The Planning Commission and Houghton Community Council (HCC) have been studying this issue for the past six months. Three public workshops were held and the Planning Commission and HCC have conducted joint study sessions to consider new zoning regulations and design guidelines. A joint public hearing was held on March 24th. Written comments can still be submitted by April 15. The Planning Commission will meet on April 14 and the Houghton Community Council will meet on April 25 to consider a recommendation to the City Council. For more information contact Dorian Collins with the Planning Department at 425-587-3249 or dcollins@kirklandwa.gov.*

7. What is the anticipated traffic impact if the TOD comes to fruition, particularly on Lake Washington Blvd and 108th Ave, i.e. how will grocery, medical, school and recreational trips add to the car count on those arterials?

Response: *A traffic assessment was conducted for a conceptual TOD project in February and it was presented to the Planning Commission and Houghton Community Council. Traffic assessments are based on a weekday "PM peak hour" standard – that is the industry standard and considered the highest level of congestion. The study analyzed the characteristics of the project, potential traffic volumes and intersection operation impacts on Ne 38th Place, Lake Washington Boulevard and 108th Avenue NE.*

Based on that analysis, the assessment found that the increase of PM trips on Lake Washington Boulevard would be 0.5% and on 108th Ave would be 2.8%. The study noted that while the daily variation in traffic would not generally be noticeable, access to and from the site needs to be carefully evaluated to consider turning restrictions and possibly adding a signal. For more information contact Gary Prince with King County at 206-263-3187 or gary.prince@kingcounty.gov.

8. Do Lakeview El, KJH, and LWHS have the capacity to absorb students from the proposed TOD?

Response: Lake Washington School District prepares a Six-Year Capital Facility Plan to establish a standard of service in order to ascertain current and future capacity. It is also used as the basis for establishing school impact fees so that new growth pays a proportionate share of needed new school facilities.

Based on Lake Washington School District's (LWSD) average student generation factor for multifamily developments, a proposed project of 200-250 units could generate 28-35 elementary students, 11-14 junior high students and 9-12 high school students. However, the actual student generation will depend on the specific number of bedrooms and unit size. That will not be known until an actual development project is proposed. In 2009-2010, the school district had sufficient capacity for Kirkland Junior High and Lake Washington High School. Lakeview Elementary School is currently over capacity. The City of Kirkland recently adopted impact fees for schools that will assist in the funding of additional capacity for schools as growth occurs. The LWSD is aware that this project is being considered. The City will continue to consult with the LWSD on this project so that District can plan accordingly. For more information from the LWSD contact Forrest Miller at fmiller@lwsd.org or 425-936-1108.

9. What is Bellevue's current position on the TOD, and what do we expect from Bellevue in the future on their part of the park and ride?

Response: The City of Kirkland has been coordinating with Bellevue on the proposed TOD (Transit Oriented Development) at the South Kirkland Park and Ride site. Bellevue staff attended two community workshops regarding the potential zoning changes. The City of Bellevue chose not to move forward with any zoning or Comprehensive Plan changes at this time. They have indicated that this is not something they will be pursuing in the near future. However, the Kirkland City Council, the Bellevue City Council and King County approved a set of mutual objectives and principles of agreement regarding a TOD at the park and ride. These principles include support for adding parking for transit riders, incorporating ground floor commercial use, providing for a range of housing including some affordable units and a majority at market rate, minimizing impacts and coordinating on the permitting process. For more information contact Paul Stewart with the City of Kirkland at 425-587-3227 or pstewart@ci.kirkland.wa.us. In Bellevue, contact Paul Inghram at 425-452-4070 or pinghram@bellevuewa.gov. At King County contact Gary Prince at 206-263-6039 or gary.prince@kingcounty.gov.

Public Works

10. What is the City doing to reduce traffic in the Houghton area?

Response: The Puget Sound region will continue to attract new residents and businesses, and growth is anticipated to continue; Kirkland works with all of our regional partners to disperse the growth and has agreed to accept a certain amount of the growth. The City recognizes that along with the growth of new residents, businesses, and visitors, traffic will also continue to grow. The roadway system that Kirkland desires does not include significant new capacity such as new roads, as a result, and if left unmitigated, congestion would become more and more of an issue. Kirkland's approach to growth is to identify key capacity improvements such as at intersections, turn lanes, use of signal communication technology to allow traffic to flow smoother and more efficiently, and to focus investment in alternate modes of transportation such as improved transit, bike lanes, and pedestrian facilities. Additionally, Kirkland strives to allow development in and around those corridors/locations where non-SOV travel alternatives are available. The south Kirkland TOD is an example of this approach. The region's growth is inevitable and planning for that growth is critical. The reduction of traffic will only come about through investment in alternatives that are compatible with Kirkland and for those living, working and visiting Kirkland to use the alternatives.

11. Need to prohibit left turns onto 108th ne from Bartells and Metro Market during rush hour 3 to 6 pm. There are 3 other exits that will allow drivers to go east or north. This will help parking lot flow and ease the back up on 108th

Response: *We can consider this idea. In situations like this, we usually work with the businesses to come to a consensus about how best to limit the access. Crash data can be reviewed to see if there is a safety concern as well. Please contact David Godfrey, Transportation Engineering Manager at dgodfrey@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3865 if you have questions or would like to discuss this further.*

12. Dear Houghton City Council Members,

My family and I have lived in Houghton across from the beautiful Carillon Woods Park (106th Ave NE & 55th) for almost 2 years. Our neighborhood is full of children and wonderful families to whom we have become great friends. Over the past year many of us who live near this park have noticed increased thru traffic resulting from backup on 108th Ave. We continue to witness many cars speeding past the park with little or no regard for the speed limit, the stop sign or children playing in or near the park. We are concerned for the safety of our children.

We would like to ask the Houghton City Council to consider having a turnabout constructed on the corner of 106th Ave NE & 55th. Other suggestions would be adding couple bright yellow signs (one going each direction) indicating "children at play" or "playground", there is currently no signage and/or turning the intersection into a 4-way stop. Although our additional suggestions would be less costly, we believe a turnabout would be the most effective in solving the actual problem of safety.

Response: *The Puget Sound region will continue to grow with new residents, businesses and visitors coming to the area; as part of that growth, the City will continue to see growth both in the City and by those travelling through the City. 108th Ave NE serves as a significant north south route through Kirkland and during the evening rush hour does tend to back up especially in the vicinity of the NE 68th Street intersection. The City of Kirkland and Sound Transit are nearing completion of design for intersection improvements at NE 68th Street and 108th Ave NE which will improve the capacity of the intersection and improved traffic flow along 108th Ave NE – this project is scheduled to be under construction this summer, and by fall we anticipate traffic flow along 108th Ave NE to improve. This improvement is likely to have a positive effect on the surrounding “by-pass” routes such as 106th Ave NE.*

Regarding your request to install traffic calming along 106th Ave near Carillon Woods Park, any potential traffic calming solution would need some degree of research into the traffic (volumes, speed), and neighborhood support prior to moving forward. The traffic circle and speed cushion program are not funded at this time, however there may be other measures such as signage or road striping that could be installed if the traffic observations that you have identified continue. Please contact David Godfrey, Transportation Engineering Manager at dgodfrey@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3865 if you have questions or would like to discuss this further.

13. I would like to request that our neighborhood receive crossing flags for the crossing area going from Phyllis Needy Park across 108th Ave. NE. This is a very busy street with buses traveling along there very regularly. Many children play in the park and it would be a very safety oriented choice to install crossing flags at this crossing area. Thank you for your time and consideration of my request. Nora Carlson

Response: *The crossing flag program is used at a number of locations throughout the City, and they are tended by volunteers. As an element of overall budget reductions in 2010, we discontinued the installation of new pedestrian flag locations. As existing sites are discontinued, primarily as a result other more permanent crossing facilities or a lack of maintenance volunteers, we will relocate existing hardware and flags to new locations. We have put your proposed location on our list to consider for relocation, and will contact you when equipment becomes available. Please contact David Godfrey, Transportation Engineering Manager at dgodfrey@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3865 if you have questions or would like to discuss this further.*

14. Provide an update on the Eastside Rail Corridor.

Response: The City has developed a webpage (www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/eastsiderailcorridor) that has a great deal of background material on the corridor. In summary, the Port of Seattle currently owns the corridor, but previously anticipated purchase by the County and Sound Transit has not occurred. Council has authorized the City Manager to begin exploring options by which the City might purchase the portion of the corridor in Kirkland. The [transportation Commission](#) is finalizing an [interest statement](#) on the Corridor and will be reporting back to Council soon. Please contact David Godfrey, Transportation Engineering Manager at dgodfrey@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3865 if you have questions or would like to discuss this further.

15. How is the city coordinating traffic and safety with Metro in aligning bus stops, crosswalks and islands for the greatest possible safety of pedestrians, especially very small children and school age going to and from the various parks and schools along this busy arterial? In particular I am concerned about the confusion and dangers that arise when cars attempt to pass buses pulled over to load and unload passengers who are sometimes using crosswalks unaware that they may be run over by cars trying to pass the buses where no pedestrian islands prevents them from doing so. Is there a way to provide well marked locations where cars may safely pass buses alleviating the frustration drivers obviously have with the long back-ups that develop behind buses? This is a complex issue. Unfortunately, the city just went to great expense of re-paving and improving sidewalks and accessible curb cuts, so I doubt this will be solved easily. Perhaps it can be addressed when the 68th corner and TOD are being acted upon and changing traffic flows at those times.

Response: You're right, this is a complicated issue. Metro is careful about where they site bus stops relative to crosswalks to try and maximize safety for bus riders. City staff can work with Metro to try and improve the current situation, however. If there is a crosswalk or bus stop that is a particular concern it would serve as a good starting point. Please contact David Godfrey, Transportation Engineering Manager at dgodfrey@kirklandwa.gov or (425) 587-3865 if you would like to discuss this further.

Lake Washington School District

16. Regarding the modernization of the International Community School, can you please share more details about:

- Involvement of the immediate school neighbors in the design & construction process, and information on how new school buildings might potentially affect current views.
- Plans for noise mitigation during construction, as well as noise mitigation resulting from the increased capacity of the facility after construction.
- Availability of a green space for neighbors to bring their children and dogs to play outside of school hours, as is currently the case.

Response: From Mike Finnegan, Deputy Program Manager, Lake Washington School District
mfinnegan@lwsd.org

- A modernization advisory team consisting of administration, faculty, staff, a neighbor and parents was assembled to provide the design team with focused advice on the new design, comment on design features, and advise the district on the suitability of design concepts. From this point out, the District will be working directly with specific staff, the design team and the City to revise the design
- The proposed new school will be no higher than the existing school.
- Noise mitigation and hours of construction is set by the City of Kirkland.
- There should be no appreciable increase in noise levels from school operations after construction
- The proposed new field will be located at the northeast portion of the site. The District is considering providing a walking track in this location, and a grassed field to play soccer. The sports court will be replaced and the proposed location is at the SW corner of the proposed new playfield. The CS playground equipment will be re-located.

- *At this point in time the availability of the school green space for use by the neighbors is unchanged.*

Also please visit the project web site for more information. There is a proposed site plan, a Q&A narrative about the proposed project, and an overlay of the proposed new structure in relation to the existing school buildings. <http://www.lwsd.org/For-Community/Tax-Dollars/School-Modernization/Pages/ICS.aspx>

17. I would like these questions answered by each city council member please.

- a) Why should all city residents be given the right to vote on whether a state legislated community council exists when only Houghton residents voted on the original annexation?

Mayor: Joan McBride—*This is a question that is best answered by the authors of the legislation.*

Deputy Mayor: Penny Sweet—*My understanding is that because the state created Community Councils about 45 years ago, the legislature could, at it's own discretion, simply end them. I think it would be fairer to allow a city wide vote rather than unilateral action on the part of the legislature.*

Since all City residents share the impact of land use decisions made by the Community Council all city residents should have an equal say on whether the Council should continue. There is a significant cost to the entire city for the continued existence of the Council both financially and in neighborhood impacts. In a time when we struggled with giving any financial support to the neighborhoods for operations and cut the Neighborhood Connections program it seems irresponsible to spend money on another layer of government.

I believe all Kirkland residents should have an equal say in their city. Unfortunately, the existence of the Houghton Community Council violates that equity.

Council Member: Amy Walen—*It seems to me that our obligation as engaged citizens and as elected representatives is to discuss our community's vision and goals and to make a plan for achieving them. This means that all of our activities can, and should be the subject of community conversation.*

In June, we will double in size, and now, more than ever, we are examining all of the city's activities to ensure that we make the new city as efficient at delivering services as it can be. In my view it is legitimate and appropriate that the whole city discuss the Houghton Community Council, and how this kind of entity should be paid for.

In the coming months, I look forward to a respectful, open and thoughtful discussion of these, and the other issues that arise through our annexation.

I'd love to hear your thoughts. Please feel free to contact me via email or telephone.

Amy email: awalen@ci.kirkland.wa.us

Amy cell: 425-381-1909

Council Member: Dave Asher—*I don't think they should.*

Council Member: Jessica Greenway—The Houghton Community Council was created as part of an agreement. The town of Houghton agreed to become part of the City of Kirkland in exchange for the creation of the Houghton Community Council to preserve local control over land use decisions. Even though many years have gone by, this agreement should still stand.

Council Member: Bob Sternoff—First a clarification of how Houghton came to become part of the City of Kirkland. The process was a merger and not an annexation. The difference between the two is important. In the case of a merger both Cities (Houghton was actually a town) had separate functioning elected governments providing services to their residents. As a condition for the merger the residents of Houghton insisted upon and were granted the right to veto land use decisions in the area being merged. This was and is a contract that did not have a sunset clause. It did however require under State Law that the residents of Houghton vote every 4 years on whether or not to retain the right to their own Community Council. It is therefore up to Houghton residents to decide. I believe that the City of Kirkland should honor their contractual agreements. If and when the residents of Houghton decide that they no longer want this right, I will honor that decision.

- b) If new legislation will provide for all city residents to vote on whether the Houghton Community Council will continue, why shouldn't all city residents be allowed to vote on whether new areas are annexed into the city?

Mayor: Joan McBride—There is no 'new legislation'. The legislation that was introduced by state legislators regarding the two remaining community councils with land use jurisdiction is dead. As for city residents voting on annexation, that is not provided for in state rules. Kirkland briefly considered asking citizens for an advisory vote on annexation but by state law annexation is voted on only by those in an annexation area.

Deputy Mayor: Penny Sweet—My understanding is that current state law for annexation is written to include only the annexation area. In my opinion that doesn't make it right, it simply makes it the law. If there is a better, more equitable way to vote on annexations then I could support legislation that would change that to require a vote of both residents and potential residents on a potential annexation.

Council Member: Dave Asher—We could, but that is not the way we have ever done business concerning annexations in the past. There were not sufficient votes on the City Council to spend \$65,000 for an advisory vote from current residents. State law does require the annexing area to vote, but it does not call for a referendum within the existing city. We have used our representative form of government to investigate issues as complex as annexation and come to a conclusion. That doesn't mean we could not have a public vote of current residents in the future.

Council Member: Jessica Greenway—The agreement between the town of Houghton and the city of Kirkland was unusual. Since that time, citizens in the existing city of Kirkland have not been allowed to vote on annexations. These two things (the existence of the Houghton Community Council and citizens ability to vote on annexations) are two different issues. I agree that citizens should have a voice in annexation decisions.

Council Member: Bob Sternoff—An annexation as noted above is different from a merger. State Law that was adopted years (and many annexations) ago does not require a vote of all of the City in order to be a valid annexation. This is the process that Kirkland had followed in all previous annexations. This is the last annexation (technically the Wildwood Condos located at the Northern border will be the last) that the City of Kirkland will do per the Growth Management Plan.

- c) Do you feel it's fair to the Houghton neighborhood to renege on annexation commitments that were made after "negotiating" certain rights over land use issues by allowing the whole city to vote on the CC existence?

Mayor: Joan McBride— The community council model is certainly a wonderful body for the greater Houghton neighborhood. I should know, I served five years on the council. But it is also fair to say that after over 40 years any institution might want to have the residents of not just Houghton but the entire city look at the role of the community council. Many residents in Kirkland are not even aware of the community council. The entire city pays for the cost of the community council so I think that entitles all citizens to have knowledge of the community councils, their pros and cons, and the history and reasons for the original (state) enabling legislation.

I think that the state legislation that was introduced in this session was not well thought out. And I am glad that the bill did not advance. It is never good for people to be surprised. It is never a good idea for residents not to be forewarned. That is certainly not the Kirkland way.

Deputy Mayor: Penny Sweet—I understand why Houghton residents don't want to lose their community council. However, my primary responsibility is to equally represent every resident of Kirkland. Under our current system, with land use veto power in the hands of only about 8% of Kirkland's population, that equality does not exist. When we talk "fair" we need to be talking about all of Kirkland.

Council Member: Dave Asher—I don't feel it is fair to renege on annexation commitments. I am told by the first, elected Mayor of the consolidated Kirkland, Bill Woods, that there was no commitment that the arrangement could never be undone. He said that state Senator Alan Bleuchel simply did not put an expiration date on the authorizing legislation. So, it is not clear about commitments from the 60's; however, I do not believe that legislation changing the situation should be put forward without a broad public discussion.

Council Member: Jessica Greenway—The recently proposed state legislation that would affect the Houghton Community Council (HB 1812) created quite a stir in Kirkland. After much discussion and feedback, the legislation was pulled. Potential changes like this should be the result of an open and transparent process. Anything less creates suspicion and mistrust between citizens and government.

I want the Houghton community to understand that the proposed legislation was just as much a surprise to me as it was to the citizens of Houghton. I regret that this legislation was proposed because the Kirkland City Council has a good working relationship with the Houghton Community Council and I hope this will not damage that relationship.

An even bigger issue, however, is government's responsibility to honor its commitments. The Houghton Community Council was established by a commitment that was made when Houghton and Kirkland were combined into one city decades ago. The Community Council was created as part of an agreement to convince Houghton to become part of Kirkland. It was part of a "trade-off": Houghton became part of Kirkland in exchange for the creation of the Houghton Community Council to preserve local control over land use decisions. A commitment was made and this commitment should be honored. How can citizens trust government if it does not honor its commitments?

The Houghton Community Council is a Kirkland institution and I believe it should continue. Yes, it can make land use planning and other decision making more complicated and time consuming. We have learned through experience that we can make the process more efficient and get a better outcome if we work together on important decisions and that we start working together early in the process. Open communication and working together leads to successful decision making.

If there is to be a change in the Houghton Community Council, it should come from the Houghton community and should be the result of an open and transparent community process. As long as the Houghton community supports and values the Houghton Community Council, I support and value the Houghton Community Council.

Council Member: Bob Sternoff—*No! Again Houghton was merged not annexed into Kirkland. Terms of the merger were negotiated and agreed upon. It is not currently legal nor is it fair that the terms of the agreement of the merger be changed. If the residents of Houghton wish to change the terms and or disband the Houghton Community Council, they are free to do so under the current State Law. Attempting to change the State Law as a way to change and or usurp a contract with our residents is not how Kirkland does business. To do so with the knowledge and affirmative votes of our Legislators however without notification to the City Council and in this case the legally elected Houghton Community Council and the residents they represent is not acceptable.*